

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 EURE-00 MCT-01 /059 W  
-----010138 301621Z /45

P R 301539Z JUN 77  
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1344  
INFO USMISSION NATO  
CINCUSNAVEUR  
CINCUSAREUR  
USNMR SHAPE  
USCINCEUR  
USARMY LIAISON GROUP? NAMFI, SOUDA BAY, CRETE, GR  
NAVDET, SOUDA BAY, CRETE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 6064

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MARR, GR, US  
SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL INCIDENT INVOLVING U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL  
IN CRETE

REF: ATHENS 5906 (DTG 241521Z JUN 77) (NOTAL)

1. ON JUNE 28, FIVE U.S. NAVY SAILORS ON TDY IN HANIA  
AND AN AMERICAN MERCHANT SEAMAN FROM A VISITING SHIP WERE  
ASSAULTED BY A LOCAL GROUP IN HANIA, CRETE. THE SIX, HAD JUST  
LEFT A DISCOTHEQUE IN THE VICINITY OF THE PORT AREA WHEN THEY  
WERE ATTACKED AND BEATEN. THREE OF THE SAILORS WERE HOSPITALIZED;  
ONE HAS BEEN RELEASED AND THE CONDITION OF THE OTHER TWO IS  
IMPROVING STEADILY AND THEY SHOULD BE RELEASED SHORTLY.

2. THE GREEK AUTHORITIES AT HANIA ARE INVESTIGATING THE  
INCIDENT AND WE UNDERSTAND THAT THEY HAVE ALREADY DETAINED  
THREE SUSPECTS. ACCORDING TO INFORMATION FROM THE LOCAL GREEK  
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AUTHORITIES THE ASSAULT WAS UNPROVOKED AND WAS NOT DUE TO ANY  
MISCONDUCT ON THE PART OF THE AMERICANS INVOLVED. THE LOCAL  
GREEK AUTHORITIES SUSPECT THAT THE PERPETRATORS OF THE ASSAULT  
BELONG TO THE COMMUNIST OF GREECE (EXTERIOR) AND THE PANHELLENIC  
SOCIALIST MOVEMENT (PASOK). (FULL DETAILS ABOUT THE INCIDENT  
AND THE INVESTIGATION ARE BEING REPORTED THROUGH MILITARY  
CHANNELS.)

3. ON JUNE 29 THE DCM DISCUSSED THE INCIDENT WITH THE DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF AND EXPRESSED OUR CONCERN OVER ITS POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECT ON U.S.-GREEK RELATIONS, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE DISTORTED AND EXAGGERATED PRESS TREATMENT GIVEN TO ANOTHER INCIDENT IN HANIA INVOLVING US MILITARY PERSONNEL LAST WEEK (REFTEL). THE DEFENSE MINISTER REACTED FORCEFULLY AND IN THE DCM'S PRESENCE CALLED THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC ORDER AND URGED THAT VIGOROUS ACTION BE TAKEN TO APPREHEND THE GUILTY PARTIES AND BRING THEM TO JUSTICE. DCM MADE THE SAME POINTS JUNE 30 WITH MFA'S 3RD POLITICAL DIRECTOR CHRYSOSPATIS.

4. INITIAL ACCOUNTS IN THE ATHENS PRESS JUNE 29 (ONLY TWO NEWSPAPERS--COMMUNIST RIZOSPASTIS AND CONSERVATIVE APOYEVMATINI--CARRIED REPORTS ON THE INCIDENT) ATTRIBUTED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE INCIDENT TO THE AMERICANS INVOLVED. PRESS COVERAGE ON JUNE 30 WAS SOMEWHAT MORE BALANCED, ALTHOUGH SOME STORIES (IN OPPOSITION LIBERAL TO VIMA AND LEFTIST TA NEA) CONTINUED TO IMPLY THAT THE AMERICANS HAD PROVOKED THE INCIDENT. IN AN EDITORIAL, CONSERVATIVE AKROPOLIS EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE RECENT INCIDENTS IN HANIA WERE DUE TO "ORGANIZED" ACTIVITIES FOR MOTIVES NOT SHARED BY THE MAJORITY OF THE CITY'S RESIDENTS. LEFTIST ELEFTHEROTYPIA WROTE "THE AMERICANS WERE BEATEN FOR NOTHING" AND WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THAT THE AMERICANS INVOLVED WERE NOT FROM THE NATO MISSILE FIRING INSTALLATION (ALLUDING TO LAST WEEK'S INCIDENT FOR WHICH THE AMERICANS ARE STILL HELD

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RESPONSIBLE). RIGHTISH ELEFTHEROS COSMOS REPORTED THAT THE POLICE IN HANIA HAVE ARRESTED SEVERAL YOUTHS AND CONTINUE THEIR INVESTIGATION TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE NEW INCIDENT WAS "PREPLANNED AND PREMEDITATED AND BY WHOM."

5. COMMENT: THE LOCAL GOG OFFICIALS AT HANIA APPARENTLY BELIEVE THAT THIS INCIDENT AND THE ONE LAST WEEK WERE DELIBERATE PROVOCATIONS BY AGITATORS WHOSE PURPOSE IS TWOFOLD: (A) TO DEMONSTRATE A STRONG LOCAL SENTIMENT OF ANTI-AMERICANISM AND (B) TO EMBARRASS THE GOG. IN OUR VIEW, WE DO NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE AS YET TO MAKE SUCH A JUDGMENT. HOWEVER, WE WERE IMPRESSED WITH MINISTER AVEROFF'S DETERMINATION IN THE MATTER AND EXPECT THAT WE WILL BE RECEIVING A FULL REPORT WHEN THE GOG'S INVESTIGATION IS CONCLUDED.

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## Message Attributes

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